

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

August 9, 2016

City Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order by Chairman Mike McCleary at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, August 9, 2016, in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

B. ROLL CALL:

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Farris, Peter Riis, Chris Neuhart, Vice-Chair Steve Erwin and Chairman Mike McCleary.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

Woodstock High School Engineering program will be starting up again. Please forward project ideas to Chair M. McCleary.

STAFF PRESENT: Recreation Department Director Dave Zinnen, Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt, Parks & Facilities Superintendent Ernie Nelson and Chief Deputy City Clerk Jane Howie.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Nick Ciccotosto, 851 E. Kimball Avenue, Woodstock.
Ms. Melissa Hormann, The Land Conservancy of McHenry County.

C. FLOOR DISCUSSION: Anyone wishing to address the Commission on an item not on the agenda may do so at this time.

1. Public Comments: None.
2. Commission Member comments for any item not on the agenda: None.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Correction requested in 3rd paragraph under April – “P. Riis replaced backstop nets at Bates.”

Correction requested in section H, “B. Farris asked about the Belcher property. J. Van Landuyt said this didn’t go to Council. The City was going to offer ½ of the asking price as they believed the price was too high.” Motion by P. Riis, second by B. Farris, to approve the May 10, 2016 Minutes, with above corrections Ayes: B. Farris, P. Riis, and Chair M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: C. Neuhart and Vice-Chair S. Erwin. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Correction under E.1. Recreation Department Report for June 2016. Delete comment, “B. Farris said there’s a definite correlation between high temperatures and attendance.” Add: “D. Zinnen added that the total attendance at the aquatic center in 2015 was 31,000.” Motion by B. Farris, second by C. Neuhart, to approve the July 12, 2016 Minutes with above corrections. Ayes: B. Farris, P. Riis, C. Neuhart, and Chair M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: Vice-Chair S. Erwin. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

E. TRANSMITTALS: The following items have been transmitted to the Commission for information and there is no discussion expected or action recommended.

1. Recreation Department Report for July 2016.

Commission asked D. Zinnen who encouraged him to write 'A Day in the Life...' article. D. Zinnen said his kids often ask him what goes on at the Recreation Center all day and what he does there. So, D. Zinnen compiled 'A Day in the Life ...'.

2. Parks Division Report for July 2016.

M. McCleary asked about the damage to a water tower. It was explained that some kids set off fireworks that hit the tower causing damage to the surface, which must be corrected so that the area doesn't rust and cause further damage in the future.

M. McCleary asked if the center rail is being installed on park benches to deter people from sleeping on them. Staff commented that this is correct.

Staff informed the Commission that Nierman Landscaping worked on the ground that was used during the *Summer in the Park* and *Barndance* events in July. There was nominal damage this year and a bit of over seeding and aeration were completed to revive the area.

The Commission asked about the recent ceiling repair in the Human Resource Director's Office. E. Nelson explained that the ceiling was un-level and it was determined that there were no ties in the ceiling. Parks Division employees made the necessary repairs.

B. Farris wanted further information about the City changing out light fixtures. E. Nelson explained that the City received grant funding for this project and Parks Division employees are changing out the ballasts for more efficient lighting.

P. Riis asked about the installation of scoreboards at Bates Park. E. Nelson will look into this and update the Commission on this project.

F. OLD BUSINESS: None.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss Chapter 5 of the Park Master Plan

The Commission discussed several items with regard to recommended standards. J. Van Landuyt will make changes as requested. Commission members thanked J. Van Landuyt for all his continued work on updates of the Park Master Plan.

2. Discuss Request to Consider Purchase of Property at 710 Lake Avenue.

Mr. Nick Ciccotosto has lived at 851 E. Kimball Avenue, next to Ryders Woods and adjacent to the property being discussed, for 31 years. The property at 710 Lake Avenue has been for sale since January 2016 due to the owner's death. The family is looking to clear the estates. Mr. Ciccotosto has no connection to the family; here's here today of his

own initiative. He explained that the property connects Ryders Woods directly to Lake Avenue and includes beautiful trees, some of which are 300 year old Oak trees, as well as deer, and red fox, to name a few. There are many other star species that use, and have used, this property, which includes the wetlands near the corner. Mr. Ciccotosto is unsure of the land value, but he believes this property should be part of the community aspect. The Metra bus line, Recreation Center, and Police Department are all in close proximity to this site. Mr. Ciccotosto is looking for ideas as to how the City could purchase / acquire this property. He believes the house on the property is historical and it could hold the Recreation Department at some point in the future. The Sanchez trust currently owns this property, which is on the market for \$1.8M. Mr. Ciccotosto would like the City to investigate as to how to acquire this property and add it to Ryders Woods, if at all possible.

Ms. Melissa Hormann from The Land Conservancy, added that the City of Woodstock manages Ryders Woods, although this is one of the hardest areas to manage as there is buckthorn along the edges of the property. Many weeds are creeping into the area from surrounding land. The wetlands are a key issue for everyone and the 300+ year old Oak trees are beautiful. P. Riis asked about the value of adding this piece of property to Ryders Woods. Would there be paths and such constructed? M. Hormann said they remove invasive species in Ryders Woods. She added that the ground layer is phenomenal and adding the acres would exponentially help the wildlife in this area. This property contains a lot of different ecosystems, which is very favorable as park land. B. Farris said the assessed value is \$350,000. M. McCleary said the City will start working on Capital Improvement Projects later this year. All recommendations go to the City Council and projects are prioritized. This land acquisition can be added to the list for review. Is there a possibility of a grant to assist with the purchase or maintenance? It is believed that the City exceeds the recommended open space for this type of grant, per population. Is it legal for a City to take donated funds? The intent would be to raise funds and then donate them for a conservation area / easement. The property has been for sale since January 2016 when the homeowner passed away. The wetlands on the property will impede building.

It was the consensus by the Commission to recommend this property to the City Council., for purchase by the City of Woodstock.

H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Tentative agenda items identified by Administration
 - a. Park Tour in September: The parks that the Commission agreed upon were touring were Davis Road Park, Ryders Woods, Peace Park, Hennen Conservation Area, and if there's time, Prairie Ridge Drive Park. The Commission will meet at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, September 13, 2016, to begin the park tour.
2. Requested by Commission: Any new member may suggest an item to be considered by the Commission at a future meeting, but must be approved by a majority of the Commission to be included as a future agenda item.

I. ADJOURN:

Motion by B. Farris, second by S. Erwin, to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission on Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 8:00 PM. Ayes: B. Farris, P. Riis, C. Neuhart, Vice-Chair S. Erwin and Chair M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried. Meeting Adjourned until the next Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission on Tuesday, September 13, 2016, immediately after the tour of selected parks.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Howie
Chief Deputy City Clerk